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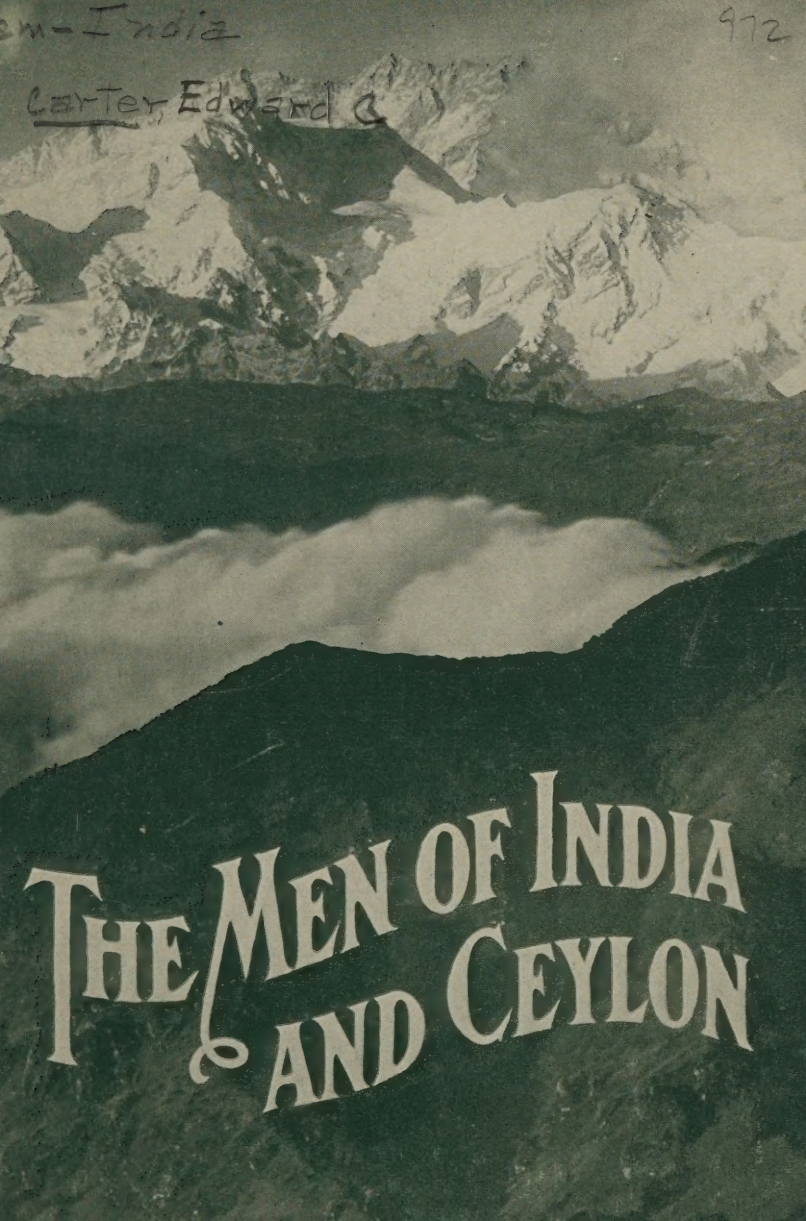

THE MEN OF INDIA AND CEYLON

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BY

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YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS
1908

THIRD TRIENNIAL ASSOCIATION CONVENTION FOR INDIA, BURMA AND CEYLON

The Men of India and Ceylon

It was in one of the smaller Indian stations that a leading Hindu remarked with sincerity: "Many of our people are attracted by the purity of the teachings of your sacred writings, but the attainment of a pure life seems just as difficult for the Christian as for the Hindu. Of the half dozen European Christians in this town, five are leading lives as purely animal as the most sensual rajah in the province; the sixth, the 'padre sahib,' leads a pure life and one of great sacrifice, but his life does not reflect credit on your religion, for I understand that the missionaries are hired on the understanding that they live above suspicion." The missionary knows no sadder sight than that of the British soldier or the American seaman (who to the native is, of course, a "Christian") staggering intoxicated from an Oriental brothel, a jeering crowd of coolies at his heels. After his sojourn abroad Tommy Atkins sings:

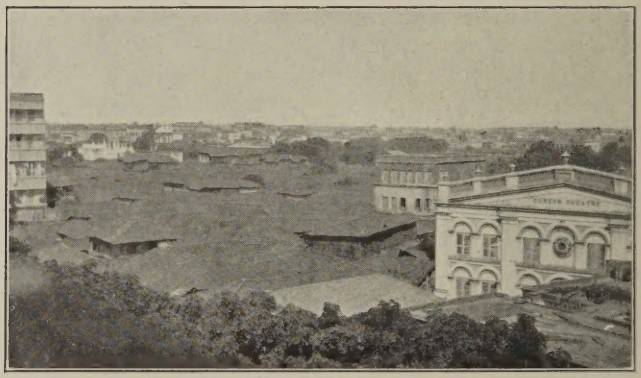
> "Ship me somewheres east of Suez, where the best is like the worst,
> Where there aren't no Ten Commandments, an' a man can raise a thirst."

And not only a thirst for whiskey, but a fiery, demon-like thirst for long nights of reveling after the scorching days; a thirst for that thrilling recklessness of absolute self-abandonment which creeps over him with the thought that winding lanes, green fields and happy kindred are leagues and leagues away and he is unnoticed and alone.

If Here Then There

If the Young Men's Christian Association is needed in North America, where the restraints of home and church and society are numerous and alert, it is thrice needed for the European (in India all white

men whether American or British are classed as Europeans) in a land where wholesome ideas are not all-pervading—where the everyday religious exercises of the common people are loathsome rather than uplifting, sensual rather than inspiring. In India homesickness, the depressing environment of low standards, an almost universal ignorance and a widespread servility combine to undermine even the strongest characters. With great wisdom large sums of money are being spent by Christian



VIEW OF CALCUTTA FROM THE COLLEGE BRANCH BUILDING

people on mission work in India. The godless, careless lives of Europeans are conceded to be obstacles to the largest success. It is apparent that in order to safeguard these generous investments, money and energy must be used in throwing about the European young men influences which make for righteousness. If the Scottish employer of hundreds of Indian laborers is a man of low morals, his example will raise impassable barriers to the influence of the missionary in the same district.

"Chummeries"

In the large cities of India the Association aims to equip modern buildings with the usual features of the best North American Associations. One of the most fruitful of these is provision for "a home away from home." Most of the boarding houses and hotels are unattractive; worse than this, they are frequently centers of gambling and intemperance. The "chummery," where a group of fellows club together, hire their own butler and keep bachelor quarters is an effort to realize a more homelike life. Even the chummeries are honeycombed with temptation for the lad just landed from the homeland. When the Imperial census was being taken in Rangoon, at a house where a half dozen young business men were living, one of the servants without hesitation stated that he was the procurer for the house. So faulty has been the standard in European society that when a retired officer, whom the whole city knew had kept a mistress in his house for years, was influenced by a friend to do the right thing and marry, he was blackballed in the club, and at once completely ostracized from society because he had married such a woman.

A Right Start

Because the first few months so often determine a man's destiny in India we make it possible for new arrivals to come to the Association boarding house, live there for six months or so, and when they have made the acquaintance of strong, clean friends, they move out and make way for others fresh from home. Two young Scots landed by the same steamer to join a firm in one of the great port cities; one was persuaded to live at the Association; the other went to a chummery because he said he wanted to get on fast and so must get in with "the crowd" from the start. The first, through the influence of the Association, was led to a personal knowledge of the Saviour, joined the Church and to-day, as the head of the department, is one of the most powerful forces for righteousness

in the city. The other did get on "fast," but in another direction; his passions became his master. When it was too late he pleaded to be taken into the Association boarding house. His firm had already booked his passage home and thither he went, one of the sad bits of wreckage that line the triumphant course of modern commercialism.

If this world-wide expansion of trade is to bring the largest good, the business men of Christendom must invest largely in the Association's effort, not merely to make men cleaner and fitter for the day's work. They must be turned into such loyal believers in the expansion of the teachings of Christ that they shall use their unique influence as men of affairs to strengthen and make even more effective the splendid work of the missionaries.

The Primary Task

The Association is not in India and Ceylon, however, primarily to save Europeans from themselves. The most urgent cry has been that of the crisis among educated Indians. It has long been the policy of Britain to throw upon the Indian people as much responsibility as possible for the administration of the Government. Of 144,-150 appointments holding *Rs. 1,000 annually, ninety-seven per cent are filled by the natives of India themselves. To fit the Indian, who has been used to a feudal order, to have a part in this well-nigh democratic administration of affairs, requires a modern and Western education. Following the lead of the missionaries, who have ever been the pioneers of education, Britain has built up a splendid system of schools and colleges. There are 180 colleges for men in the Empire, and the Government has great universities at Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, Lahore and Allahabad. The Indian student of to-day works almost wholly in the English language, and takes up about the same subjects as the English lad at Eton and Oxford. What must be the influence of a handful of college trained

*A rupee equals one-third of a dollar.

BRAHMAN PRIEST OR "HOLY" MAN

men in a land where only 12 per cent of the male population can read! These students are to be leaders of the nation. As magistrates, revenue officers, judges, lawyers, inspectors of traffic and trade—replacing the rajahs and ancient princes—they will have supreme influence in village and district.

Shattering Idols

During school days the new knowledge of the Occident is hardly assimilated. The boy still remains devoted to the superstitious religious observance of his home. In an out of the way town I once saw a high school boy, just out from recitations, his books under his arm, starting down the street for home. He saw a Brahman approaching; kneeling, he laid his Shakespeare on the ground, and with his hands wiped the dust from the dirty bare feet of the Brahman and then drew his hands over

his forehead and eyes—because the very dust from the holy man's feet was purifying to him.

When he leaves school, however, and goes up to the great university, for the first time he begins to appreciate the learning of the West. The modern commercial spirit is everywhere evident. On the train en route from home he travels in a modern car. At every side station he notices Eurasian officials, hustling holy Brahmans and coolie outcasts into the same seat. Arriving at his destination, Madras, Calcutta or Bombay, he is thunderstruck by the maze of trolley cars, the telegraphs, automobiles, great department stores, magnificent hotels, parks and boulevards. An air of scorn for anything that savors of the old village worship pervades the college lecture room. The "Holi," which used to bring merriment as a boy, now appears as one of the most obscenely disgusting of religious observances. Features of the Mahurram, which used to seem harmless enough, he now taboos as the fanaticism of the ignorant crowd. In a word, the scales are falling from his eyes. The old implicit faith in Hinduism has vanished; with this discovery comes lack of faith in good. Far better that he be held by his parents' religion than pass through the critical college days and on into life without any religion at all. There is a sad irony in the college, that by its Western teaching shatters the student's faith in his ancestral rites and at the same time is unable (because it is a Government institution) to give a knowledge of the one religion which will be satisfying.

Vice Rampant

The naked facts from the census tables are unanswerable appeals for the establishment of Young Men's Christian Associations. According to the last census in Calcutta, in Ward Five, with a population of 49,069, one woman in every four and in Ward Six, with a total population of 52,968, one woman in every five is a sister of shame. One of the most trustworthy sociologists in Calcutta has written thus: "I have often been

amazed at the bold effrontery that characterizes the evil. Not content with seeking the seclusion impurity loves, we have long streets no respectable man or woman cares to walk. Even main thoroughfares are given up, it would seem, to the members of what the census volume calls a 'disreputable profession.' Parts of Chitpore road, Cornwallis street, College street, Amherst street, Corporation street—all streets of importance with an enormous daily traffic—are the visible haunts of hundreds of women and children of ill fame. And Sodom itself could not have furnished a more terrible picture, in its significance rather than in its indecency, than can be witnessed by any one who betakes himself to the quarters where the evil has segregated itself. Truly the evil is obtrusive, nay, even defiant."

CALCUTTA TENEMENTS

Called by the Church

The Association is in India at the call of the missionaries who represent the Christian Church. It was in 1887 that Dr. Jacob Chamberlain of India came to Northfield to urge the claims of that land upon the Young Men's Christian Association. In 1888, the missionaries of the evangelical churches of Madras sent an appeal to the International Committee, asking that a secretary be sent to their city. The International Convention, which met in Philadelphia in 1889, authorized the appoint-

ment of a secretary to work in Madras. Mr. David McConaughy, the general secretary at Philadelphia, sailed in October, 1889. No more striking testimony to the work has been presented than a resolution passed at the Decennial Missionary Conference in Madras in 1902, which was the most representative gathering of missionaries ever held in India; all the Protestant societies sent their ablest leaders. The resolution reads as follows:

"The Conference hereby records its hearty and thorough appreciation of the work of the Young Men's Christian Association in India, Burma and Ceylon. The Conference commends its general principles and methods, and affectionately accords to those engaged in its work its prayers and fellowship, and emphasizes the strong claim which the Young Men's Christian Association work in India has already established upon the prayers, sympathy and support of the home churches."

Not a Side Issue

Now that at last the obligation has been assumed, there is nothing ahead but increasing energy and sacrifice. Let this not appear as a mere side issue in the work of the home Associations. Unless we spring into the fray with our best men backed by most generous resources, the North American Associations will have failed to discharge their duty to the Church of Christ. The missionaries who have bade us do this work are the ambassadors of the home Church which every Association aims to serve.

The same principles underlie the Association work at home and abroad. The Indian student, like his cousins across the seas, has a body, a mind and a soul. Our largest Associations have well-equipped gymnasiums. Much attention is given to out-of-door recreation. Association teams have stood high in public athletic contests. The occasions for social intercourse are doing much to establish the idea, so foreign to India, of a universal brotherhood. The public restaurant and

lunch counter has been potent in breaking down the artificial restrictions of caste and racial jealousy.

The Dynamics

The department which towers above all others is that of religious work. To many a student, doubting his own religion, we have been able to open the Bible for the first time. Bible classes, personal work, lectures on Christianity and preaching in the open air to great audiences of college men are means used effectively. Many come from curiosity and some to hear correct English, but others come in earnestness to discover the way of life. Appeals to lecture on Christianity have come to us from colleges where there was not a single Christian student. In one college, after I had spoken without compromise on the supremacy of Christianity, the Hindu students and professors waited on me in a body, begging me to remain with them a solid fortnight.

Bible study is conspicuous among Association activities, for the teaching of the Scriptures is the prime thing that we have to give. During the last year the number of young men in Association Bible classes increased from 2,300 to 3,010. One hundred and forty-eight young men were reported in 1906 to have joined Christian churches as a result of the Association's influence. With an exceedingly inadequate staff of secretaries we are touching the fringe only of the real opportunity.

Metropolitan Models

Calcutta is the leading student center; in its colleges are registered more men than in Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and Chicago. Besides the 10,000 university students there are upwards of 30,000 boys in the great high schools of Calcutta. Within a mile of 86 College street—the student and boys' buildings—there are 7,000 University men and 10,000 high school boys. The Association conducts two hostels or boarding clubs and maintains numerous Bible classes, lectures and religious meetings. Open air services are frequently held, attended largely by students.

BUILDING—COLOMBO

Adjoining the college branch is the Boys' building, given by Mr. Wanamaker. The well-equipped gymnasium is an absolutely unique thing among Indian schoolboys. The Central branch, in the business section of the city, is working for Europeans and is paying all expenses, including the salary of the secretary. Another vigorous branch is maintained among the Eurasians which promises to become the largest in the city.

Madras is the metropolis, capital, social and educational center of a Presidency more populous than the British Isles. In this city, to which millions turn for their standard of civilization, the Association is becoming an increasing force for righteousness. Within the splendid building on the Esplanade 600 members are being influenced in the direction of Christ's conception of manhood. Caste is being destroyed among the

CIATION—FIELD DAY

sixty residents (twelve races) of the hostel and the many more restaurant patrons who eat together—Mohammedans, Parsees, Hindus and Christians. For several years its business and technical courses have led the Presidency in the number of students who made the Government examinations. The physical department is leading men to supplement the reflective Indian life with an appreciation and possession of the physique demanded by modern conditions. Without devices inquiring Hindus fill the Bible classes, limited in number and duration only by the endurance of the available teaching force. Business men are being won to Christian faith and to belief in the whole missionary enterprise. These activities involve a budget of Rs. 8,000, exclusive of rentals, raised in Madras, and their direction taxes the time and energy of one foreign and three Indian secretaries. North American secretaries are also in

ESPLANADE, MADRAS

Colombo, Allahabad, Jamalpur and Bangalore, while Britain has representatives in Bombay, Simla, Rangoon and Lahore.

Work for Railway Men

Recently a new type of work in the Orient has been begun, namely, for railroad men. India has extensive railways, aggregating 28,000 miles, with about 125 division points, making this land the fourth in the world in mileage. Most of these lines are owned by the Government. Three hundred and fifty thousand men are employed. The men in the higher grades of the service speak English, though only 5,300 are Europeans. Three years ago the home Associations sent out Mr. F. J. Michel to study the railway field in India. All the principal railways were visited and the social, physical, intellectual and spiritual needs were studied. A report was submitted to the Government Railway Board, who recommended that an experimental Association be started at Jamalpur, the headquarters

of the largest Indian railway. The Mechanics' Institute, the Gymkhana, the Swimming Bath Club and the Apprentice Engineers' Club all voted to disband and to be reorganized as departments of the Railway Association. Of the success of the experiment the chief official at Jamalpur writes as follows: "In the Railway Young Men's Christian Association, after an experience of twenty-nine years among the railway folk in India, I have found an organization which has it in its power

RAILWAY YARDS, JAMALPUR

to supply some of the most pressing needs of the daily life of the Indian railway man. I have known Jamalpur now for a period extending over twenty-six years and been closely associated with its gradual development. The past year has been the most active in its history from four points of view—social, educational, spiritual and physical, which are all invariably comprised in the work of the Association."

Facts of Progress

In spite of great obstacles and serious undermanning, the movement is showing steady numerical growth. After scarcely fifteen years of effort there are now over 100 Associations in India, with a membership exceeding 8,000. In the same period the Association property has increased from $11,000 to $450,000. Three years ago there was but one native on the staff of the Indian National Council, which is the supervisory committee for India, Burma and Ceylon, to-day there are five; three years ago the total number of young men enrolled in Bible study classes was 1,880, at present there are over 3,000; in 1904 the budget of the National Council was $2,000, in 1908 it will exceed $8,000; in 1906 seventy-one Associations expended $60,000 for current expenses. There are now forty-eight Association libraries with forty-two thousand volumes, thirty-two Associations provide football, twenty-six cricket, and fourteen hockey. There are forty-five tennis courts. During the two years, 1905 and 1906, the number of Indian secretaries increased from nine to seventeen. The total membership of the Associations increased thirteen, and the enrolment in Bible study thirty-two per cent. In 1907 five student conferences, or camps, similar to Northfield and Lake Geneva, were held in different parts of the country.

Untabulated Results

There are results, not only in statistics of attendance in gymnasiums, reading rooms and Bible classes, but also of Hindus who have left all to follow Christ. There are no mass movements among the students; for this reason the individual decision is all the more significant. A Brahman student, after three years' residence in an Association hostel, decided that he could only serve his country the most fully by becoming a Christian. It meant torture, starving, threatening and final disinheritance. But he forsook all, remained staunch and is to-day a tower of strength among his fellows. Our Saviour's word that a man's

ONE OF FIVE STUDENT CAMPS

foes shall be those of his own household is being constantly illustrated. The fibre of some of the young Indian converts would do credit to the young men of any land.

Caste or Character

A year ago I was traveling from Calcutta up to Allahabad. Half way up the line a Brahman gentleman entered the car. We engaged in conversation. At length I brought him to his attitude toward Christianity. He soon inquired if I knew anything about the Young Men's Christian Association. With a good deal of pride he told me that his son, a medical student in Calcutta, was living in the Association hostel (boarding house). "Has he no Brahman relatives in the city with whom he could live?" I asked. "Don't you know that in the Association hostel he is daily eating with low caste Hindus, with Mohammedans and with Christians, and so losing his caste?" "Yes," he said,

"there are Brahman relatives he might live with and they have been anxious to have him, but I would much rather have him live at the Association and lose his caste but keep his character, than have him live with the holy relatives, adhere to the forms of caste, but lose his character." Indian parents are quick to realize what is beneficial to their sons. In the great cities there are none who understand more vividly than the educated men that India's only moral hope lies in the teachings of the gospel.

By Indians For Indians

Our aim is not to undertake all this work ourselves. The great bulk of Indian young men can only be evangelized by Indian young men. We are building up strong Associations at pivotal points to be examples to an entire community, and to serve as training schools to the large numbers of young men on whom will rest ultimately the entire burden. It is apparent that a high standard must be set. We must have a force of secretaries at all these places sufficient not only to carry on the daily routine of an all-round Association; they must have a large amount of time to give to teaching, training and inspiring strong men to lead the Indian Christian forces. Largely through the influence of one of our splendid native secretaries two significant movements have been organized by which Indian laymen are rallying to the evangelization of India as never before. One of these societies, the Indian Missionary Society, of Tinnevelly, of which Mr. Azariah is general secretary, has sent out four of their own young men as missionaries into another language area, a thousand miles away. These missionaries in the past four years have secured seven native associates, forty-one baptized adherents and two hundred and thirty-one catechumens. The second society, the National Missionary Society of India, has received the cordial support of Indian Christians of every Protestant denomination. From every province and city of India financial contributions have

been received. A large unoccupied territory in the Punjab has been selected as the first mission field, and the first missionary is a graduate of the Punjab University and of St. John's Divinity School. He volunteered for this field when attending the World's Student Christian Federation Conference at Tokyo. In the theological seminary at Insein, Burma, about one-fourth of all the students are volunteers preparing to turn a deaf ear to the pastorates in their home churches in order to go into far districts among strange peoples of different tongues as foreign missionaries of the Church in Burma.

SIR HARNAM SINGH,
CHAIRMAN INDIAN NATIONAL COUNCIL

Increase of Christianity

The Christian Church in India has claims on the Church in the West as never before. Turn to the Imperial census. The native Protestant Christian community in 1891 was 592,355; in 1901 it was 970,421, an increase of 63.8 per cent. According to the most reliable statistics the native Protestant Christian population in India (excluding Burma) in 1851 was 91,092;

in 1901 it was 871,991, showing the almost unbelievable increase of 857.2 per cent. The careful student of history bases his belief on the ultimate triumph of Christianity in India not so much on these statistics, striking though they seem, but on the remarkable similarity in the conditions of the ancient Roman world and those existing in India to-day. Christianity is working in India to-day precisely in the same way as it worked in the Roman Empire. It is not often that investments give such a large and, best of all, such a soul-satisfying return.

SHERWOOD EDDY ON AN EVANGELISTIC ITINERARY

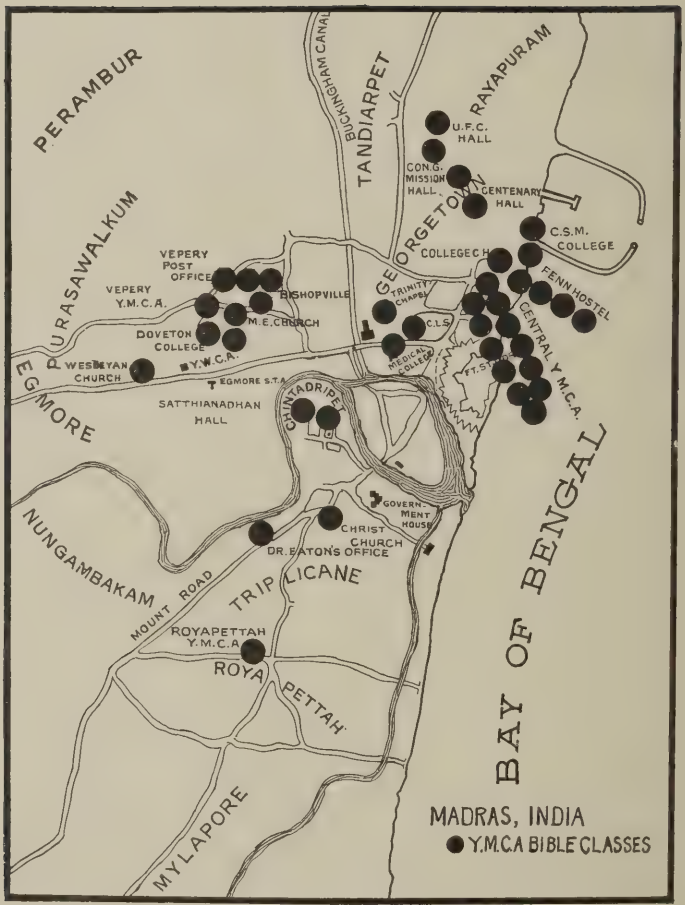
High Recognition

The president of the Calcutta Association is Sir Andrew Fraser, the governor of the province of Bengal. The treasurer is the head of the largest steamship company in Asia. The honorary president of the Rangoon Association is the Lord Bishop; the president is a justice of the High Court. The president at Bombay, the Honorable H. E. E. Proctor, is the head of the largest commercial firm in the city, president of the chamber

of commerce and a member of the governor's council. In Allahabad the Association's honorary president is the Honorable Sir John Stanley, the chief justice of the United Provinces, and the president is the commissioner of the Allahabad district. Colombo's president is a justice of the Ceylon chief court, and the vice president is the Honorable Mr. John Ferguson, C. M. G., the editor of the leading newspaper of the colony. The president at Hyderabad is the mayor of the city; at Simla, the legislative secretary to the Government of India; at Naini Tal, a British colonel; at Bangalore, the Honorable Mr. Stuart Fraser, C. I. E., the political resident for the native state of Mysore. These men and many others are not figure-heads. For example, the auditor of one of the largest railways in India spends on an average over an hour a day as treasurer of the local Association. The head of the leading law firm in Calcutta in the recent financial canvass secured over $8,000 in subscriptions from various business men on whom he called.

Government Favor

Even more significant is the approval shown by the Government itself. The Government of Burma sold the Association a building site valued at $33,000 for $10,000, to be paid without interest in ten annual instalments. Besides this they made a cash grant toward the building of $2,500. In Calcutta, besides making a grant of $14,000 toward the support of the college branch, the Government of Bengal is now making a yearly grant of $800 to the work of the various branches and has promised an additional grant of $920 annually as soon as a physical director is appointed. Within the past month the Government of Bengal has made a grant of $12,000 toward the work of the Central branch. The Bombay Association has recently received a grant of $1,000 for their library. Nagpur received a grant of $1,330 toward their building's total cost of $5,000. Government grants for current expenses to the several Associations amount to nearly Rs. 1,000 per month.



FORTY BIBLE CLASSES—ENROLMENT THREE HUNDRED

"Anywhere, Provided It be Forward"

It is not with hesitancy that the movement in India appeals to the North American Associations. It is their creation — it has been called into being by the missionaries of the Church. It is reaching Europeans of power in large numbers. It is influencing Indian young men all over the Empire to go into Government positions and professional life, servants not of themselves, but of their fellow men and of the Most High. It is influencing some of the choicest of these to give their lives to Association and missionary work. It is succeeding beyond all expectation. It has the support and interest of officials, business men and the Government itself. It is becoming a mighty power for evangelism with the most mighty men of a myriad nation. Not only without hesitancy does India approach the home Associations, but also with a great boldness and confidence that they will rise to their splendid privilege in sending out men and money and prayer on such a scale that the world shall realize that the religion of Christ is indeed the power of God unto salvation for all mankind.

Where More about the Foreign Work of the North American Associations is Available

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